



# BLACK FRIDAY

## Where is Jesus?



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Evangelist Valerie Marshall-Editor, Publisher & Writer

How would you feel if someone threw you a birthday party and your guest ignored you? Imagine walking into the room and not one sole says a word to you. You stand there looking around the room, watching people cheer and toast one another. Some are opening gifts, some laughing, dancing and having a ball. No one ever looks up to say "Happy Birthday", or walks over to give you a hug, no birthday wishes, no kisses', not even a birthday song. By now, you probably feel left out; in fact, you realize the party has nothing to do with celebrating you or your birthday. No one ever acknowledges you, no one toast you, gives you a gift...as a matter of fact it is like a dream...No one see you!

I often wonder what it would be like if Jesus returned to earth on Christmas day and walked around visiting everyone's homes and drop by all the parties going on this time of year. I see visions of people ignoring Him as he walks through your house, my house, and our communities. I see Him watching people celebrate around a large feast, cheering, toasting, and opening gifts, laughing, dancing, and having a ball. There will be millions of people, receiving gifts from family and friends, but never mentioning His name. As you celebrate this Christmas Season, it is my deepest desire that Jesus is celebrated throughout the earth. Isn't this what

Christmas is all about? This is a great time of year to make an impact to the lost sheep of the world, people like your mother, father, uncle, aunt, brother, sister, daughter, and son. We should be sharing the gift of life, "Jesus". God so loved the world so much that he gave us His only begotten Son, who is going to save many from their sins.

Instead of testifying about the provision God sent to us, we witness the media advertising everything but the miracle of Christ's birth or anything relating the ultimate gift, Jesus Christ. We see and hear what the commercials are promoting; "Black Friday". Some even call it "Blue Friday". The media give no recognition that something divine came to earth.

We need to snap out of it! Check out the way the Apostle Paul rebuked the people in Galatians 3:1. Even though we, (Christians) know the truth, its as though someone has cast a spell on us. We are blinded by the tricks of the enemy once again!!! "Oh, foolish Galatians! Who has cast an evil spell on you? For the meaning of Jesus Christ's death was made as clear to you as if you had seen a picture of his death on the cross."

December 25th has been declared the date to celebrate the glory of God, the Savior's birth, the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings! Instead, we fall under hypnosis by one commercial after another. The great sales and shopping list filled with the wishes of little boys and girls, mother and fathers, sister and brothers. Millions at the

shopping malls, people running, pushing arguing and fighting over parking spaces or complaining of long checkout lines. Many will stay up late rushing to the stores at midnight to get what they think is a great price. People spending more money on Christmas gifts for one day than what they give back to the Lord in a year. Money that can't be paid back will be spent on gifts. People using credit cards spending thousands of dollars for people who will not appreciate the effort made to bless them.

Let me ask the question: Why do you celebrate Christmas? If you were to randomly pick a child off the street, ask them what they thought the meaning of Christmas meant, what do you think most would say? My guess is that Jesus' name would never be mentioned. It is hard to believe that parents and guardians would rather go in debt for one day than to sit down and teach the true meaning of Christmas. We must teach the importance of Christ's birth, the vehicle in which God chose to bring Christ to earth, how Christ, was protected until His mission was carried out, and how His mission has already saved many from eternal destruction.

I had an opportunity to interview people about the importance of Jesus being born to a virgin. Some of



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By Jan Hasak  
Paradise California

## A FIFTY-DOLLAR LIMIT



I recently retired and finding myself in the midst of an economic crash, I knew I had to save money. But this opportunity was just too good to pass up. My long-time prayer partner Cathy had invited me to a Women of Faith conference. I hadn't been to one in ten years. The registration fee was nominal, but expenses multiplied like mushrooms in a bog as I factored in a hotel room along with lunches, dinner, gas and wear-and-tear for a 400-mile round trip. Added to those costs would be my inevitable purchases of books and CD's from the speakers and musicians who would grace the conference. After all, back-of-the-room sales are where most performers make their money. And I am the consummate shopper. How could I afford to go without overspending on peripherals? As I often reminded my children, compact disks—like video games—are wishes, not needs. After all, Jesus said, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions." Luke 12:15 (NIV). In response, the Holy Spirit piped up with a conviction I could not ignore: "Spend no more than \$50 at the merchandise tables. That's your limit." "Ok, God," I whispered. "Fifty dollars will not go very far to buy the latest CD's from my all-time favorite singers. After all, Sandi Patty will be there. So will Nicole C. Mullen. And you *must* know that I read all the books ever written by Patsy Clairmont. But I'll let You lead." During the three-hour drive to Cathy's house I listened to music from the performers scheduled to sing at the conference. After one CD would finish and before another one would start, I would press the "off" button and ask God again to show His power in all this. I thought of how the new-

est books I'd want to buy would all be hard-cover and therefore more expensive. But the Lord already knew this, didn't He? I would then engage the play button and hear the strains of "I Know My Redeemer Lives" from the car's speakers. My soul would be "re-calmed" and refreshed as the music bathed my ears.

As soon as I reached Cathy's apartment I swathed myself in her love as we caught up on all the latest news. Then we took off for the conference. During the first session various speakers inspired us to achieve greater spiritual heights, providing lessons in forgiveness and tough love. We laughed, cried and praised the Lord for His kindness in letting us sit in this huge convention center with 15,000-plus other women. At the end of the evening we viewed the merchandise on display, fighting our way through the crowds.

*Eye candy*, I thought when I finally got close enough to read the book titles without squinting. Tote bags full of authors' books and a souvenir mug beckoned to me. Music albums turned their shiny covers toward me, pleading, "Pick me!" I succumbed to buying only one book, saving my precious money for the next day. This strategy allowed me time to pray and reflect before making any purchases that would lead to buyer's remorse.

The next day we sang praises with the performers and listened to speakers who laid open their hearts—and subtly but inevitably pitched their goods. After lunch I bought two hardbacks. Now I had spent \$38 of my precious cash. The next morning we listened to Nicole C. Mullen croon as her dance troupe flitted across the platform. I absolutely had to get her latest recording. So, I made the purchase, exceeding my threshold by \$6, and sought her autograph. She wrote my first name and "Psalm 139" on my CD cover! I knew right away she was referring to Psalm 139:14 (NIV): "I praise you because I am

fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well." I had a strange sensation that God was okay with my spending \$56.

On the way home Cathy and I shared our deepest convictions from the 3-day event. How one courageous speaker's struggles spoke to our hearts. How the music tripped spiritual circuits in our brains. Then she turned to me. "Jan, I want to pay you gas money for driving us to the conference." She put \$6 cash in my dash tray, right next to my charging cell phone. As I gripped the wheel tighter I glanced sideways at her.

"Cathy, you are not going to believe this. I overspent at the conference by exactly \$6! You just confirmed that I was not wrong to buy that last CD." She reeled in astonishment, having had no inkling of my \$50 ceiling until then.

After I dropped her off at her apartment building, I high-fived God for His confirmation. If I hadn't received that \$50 maximum from Him, I would have missed witnessing His wonders. This turn of events could not have been an accident. Why would Cathy give me \$6 and not an even five-dollar bill? Such a seemingly small thing, yet I was awestruck that the Lord would speak to me through cash that would barely buy two lattes at Starbucks.

Women of faith? I was among the ranks of such ladies for a long time, but blind to the implications of membership in this elite group. By the unfolding of this miracle, I now see the true meaning of faith. Through a fifty-dollar limit.

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Post your comments or send us your contact information. We will be watching for your comments and responses. Blessings to all!



By Lowell Nye  
Wisconsin

## The "Word" Destroys Strongholds!

Hello everyone! Well the Word is true and mighty, able to tear down strongholds and make corrections in the believers life. Does it do that if we don't open it? NO! Do we read It enough? A resounding NO! It's a discipline and one worthy of my time I know! FACT: God the Holy Spirit resides on the inside of me. One weekend I went to our Faith walkers men's meeting that has been in operation for over 15 years now and the one thing that came home to me clearly is the importance of doing something for yourself that will increase your walk with God.

Write a journal, That's right. When you are in your "Quiet Time" with God, simply have a notebook handy and watch what happens. After reading the Word, sit there quietly meditating on what you just read, have your hand on a pen and be a ready writer. You will be surprised at what follows. God the Holy Spirit somehow gets through your thick skull and hardened heart then starts talking to you about something that is so neat you just have to write that down, then date it!

Then after He has visited with you a few moments and you filled the page ( sometimes I can't write fast enough folks!) with his loving direction and guidance then come back to it a few days later and see what has transpired in your life! Seriously! When my first wife was divorcing me back in the 80's, it goes without saying the turbulent was for me. I was MISERABLE! There were two things that would not desert me, My Lord and Savior Jesus, and my Holy Bible. I made the most of my personal relationship with Him. The rest is history. I wrote 5 volumes of notes during that time. Beloved, that got me through the tough times, along with the love and fellowship I got from the Kingdom of God in Texas. I could



see how I felt and how I was guided and loved by the Lord as He sweetly got me through it. So for those of you who are reading this,

do this and watch your relationship with God improve. There isn't a one of you out there that can couldn't do without a deeper walk with God. Amen?  
Habakkuk 2:2-3  
and Proverbs 7;1-3  
In Him  
Lowell Nye

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- ◆ Contributes financially towards the ministry.
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### A Prayer of Faith for Salvation...

Father I come to You in the name of Jesus Christ. I confess that I am a sinner and have sinned against You. Forgive me for all my sins, I repent of every sin I ever committed against You. I choose to follow, obey and walk in your commands. I accept Jesus as my Lord, Master & Savior. Jesus, I believe that you were born of the virgin Mary, crucified and died for my sins and the sins of others. I believe You rose from the dead on the third day, was seen by many after Your resurrection, and that you ascended into Heaven and alive today. Jesus, I ask you to be the Lord and Commanding Officer of my life. I receive you as my new companion and friend with all of my heart. I announce you as my "New King and God". Jesus, I believe You live in me, I declare You as King of Kings, today and for the rest of my life I shall build an altar in my heart to serve You only for all eternity, AMEN.

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By Gloria Kyeyune  
Kampala, Uganda Africa

# Let It Go!

Part 1 of 2



Many are offended and hurt by the people they love and those close to them from their work places, church fellowships, neighbourhoods

and family. They harbour this pain and choose not to forgive. The anger they feel grows into bitterness, resentment, and sometimes the urge to get revenge. Allow me open your eyes today.

In 2006 I travelled to London for a Morris Cerullo conference. After the conference I stayed for a couple of months as God was using me to lead prayer, praise and worship in different churches. There was this particular church that I often attended. The very first Sunday I was there I led worship and after the service I talked to several people, among them was a young lady who had been married for seven years but had no child. She narrated her story.

She and her husband had been in and out of hospitals and several pastors had prayed for but nothing had happened! I responded by telling her she would be pregnant before I left London, I don't think she believed me but that didn't matter, because being a woman of faith I believed the words that came out of my mouth. Praying through the night till dawn had become my custom. I would pray for her too. One night after a couple of weeks the Lord told me to ask her about her family and if she was harbouring any bitterness and forgiveness in her heart. I invited her one night to pray

with me and that night she opened up to me, she had resentment towards her elder step-sister who had been mean to her since childhood and she believed she was behind her barrenness. She would always refer to her step-sister as "witch!" In short, I asked her to forgive her for all she had done to her and to let it all go, which would be the key to her conceiving a child. Thank God she did what I asked her, we prayed together and instantly I witnessed on her face the peace within her. In fourteen days she had conceived. Her daughter is 3 and another is on the way. Praise be to God!" For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive you 15 but if you do not forgive men their trespasses neither will your father forgive your trespasses" Mathew 6:14-15

The reason why some of our prayers don't get answered, is because we haven't forgiven those that have offended us and God hasn't forgiven our sins either, these sins block our petitions and our prayers become an abomination to Him. But who are we not to forgive others after the sacrifice Jesus made for us at Calvary? There is no sin too great for God to forgive and if our desire is to be like Him every day, we have to learn to be loving and forgiving! God wants to redeem even those people or that person you feel does not deserve forgiveness. Release them to Him. "Forgiveness is not about forgetting, it's about letting go of an-

other's throat"-The Shack, William P. Young. Forgiveness is the antidote for revenge. (see Gen 50:15-21) when you harbour bitterness and un-forgiveness you open a door way to Satan and his demons to operate in your life, bringing sickness, misery, lack, and no peace of mind. In other words, you are defiled! and dignity, a peace of mind, it releases the person from judgment and it brings God to incline His ears to our prayers.

## Comments from the Editor...

*I would like to thank all the contributing authors for this quarters messages. You are a blessing to our reading audience!*

**Jan, thanks for sharing your story about the \$50 dollar limit. God is looking for obedience, with obedience comes trust, then the keys!**

**Lowell, thanks for providing us with your idea to journal, I have used this method in my own quiet time. It really works, you can really hear God speak!**

**Gloria, thanks for sharing the freedom we get from forgiving others. This was a valuable lesson I had to learn. It was hard, but so rewarding!**

*(Continued on page 6)*

# The Vision

Present Christ  
Discipleship  
Freeing Captives  
Restore Hope  
Home Mission Bible  
studies

## The Mission

*Writing it down helps people to read and re-read. Our writings become a mantle of our faith. Writing is a breeding ground for planting seeds that will last a life time, Even after we are gone to be with the Lord. Others will pick up this Magazine and gain hope, restoration, direction, and prayerfully, take the mantle and run with it!*

*Think about it, through the years people are blessed because someone took the time to write it down. We are challenged this very hour to write it down...and then publish it!*

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## Jesus is Better than Santa

Santa lives at the North Pole. JESUS is everywhere. Santa rides in a sleigh. JESUS rides on the wind and walks on the water.

Santa comes but once a year. JESUS is an ever-present help.

Santa fills your stockings with goodies. JESUS supplies all your needs.

Santa comes down your chimney uninvited JESUS stands at your door and knocks. And then enters your heart.

You have to stand in line to see Santa. JESUS is as close as the mention of His name.

Santa lets you sit on his lap. JESUS lets you rest in His arms.

Santa doesn't know your name, all he can say is "Hi little boy or girl, What's your name?" JESUS knew our name before we did. Not only does He know our name, He knows our address too. He knows our history and future and He even knows how many hairs are on our heads.

Santa has a belly like a bowl full of jelly. JESUS has a heart full of love.

All Santa can offer is HO HO HO. JESUS offers health, help and hope.

Santa says "You better not cry". JESUS says "Cast all your cares on me for I care for you. Santa's little helpers make toys. JESUS makes new life, mends wounded hearts, repairs broken homes and builds mansions.

Santa may make you chuckle but JESUS gives you joy that is your strength.

While Santa puts gifts under your tree, JESUS became our gift and died on the tree. It's obvious there is really no comparison. We need to remember WHO Christmas is all about.

We need to put Christ back in Christmas.

Jesus is still the reason for the season.



Submitted by Rick Sluss  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

## Vexed in My Spirit

Veronica Faith, Chicago Illinois



Have you ever heard the phrase, "vexed in my spirit" and wondered what it meant? Well I always wondered until I recently experienced it. The dictionary definition for vexed is irritated. A thesaurus had: annoyed, angry, irritated, displeased, and upset listed. I would say that I felt all of those listed, but felt mostly angry.

My niece and I had attended a church picnic. We were having a wonderful time until it was time to eat. Now this church had sent out flyers, advertised the event on Facebook, had told everyone about this picnic. They had even personally invited people living in a shelter to attend. Well, when it came time to eat I sent my niece to get her-

self a plate. She came back empty-handed. I asked her where her food was. She was told that line was for church members only. So I asked the first lady which line was for guest and she pointed and said, "The shelter and guest line is over there."

So I sent my niece over there. When she came back she had a hotdog, a hamburger, a bag of chips and a melted cupcake. I asked her was that all she wanted and where was her drink. She replied that's all they had, she wasn't given anything to drink and gave me her hamburger. I told her I couldn't believe that's all they had for "guest." Now my niece is only nine and

even she noticed the discrepancy in the food that was served to both groups. She told me the "church members" line had ribs, chicken, potato salad, greens, spaghetti, hot links etc. and wanted to know why the other people weren't able to eat the same food.

I watched as "church members" walked about with their plates piled high with food and their guest barely had any food on their plates. That's when I became vexed in my spirit. I couldn't believe that a church would make such a difference in the food

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# “And Not be Weary?”

Part 1

Kym Martin-Amorio, Chicago Heights, IL



This morning I wept on my Fathers chest with

the warmth of the son on my face caressing my troubled mind. I said nothing, and even my thoughts were tired. Life has been wearing on me and all I could do was lay my head on the car window and listen to my Daddy's words. This is what He said...

**‘My daughters are tired and my sons toss in frustration. But if you would step away from the hustle and bustle of your life and fall back into my arms, and allow my warmth to cover your troubles, I will break every yolk... Every hard place, sooth every heartache, mend every brokenness... Allow Me to cover you in this wilderness. It is a dry and thirsty land and I am the rock that is Higher than you. I AM HERE where I have ALWAYS been but will you reach for ME? Getting carried away by life is an age old trick to keep you separated from my embrace.**

**You were made by Me and for Me to love you. YOU WERE MADE TO WORSHIP Me! In my presence there is FULLNESS OF JOY. If your every act were an act of worship unto Me, you would never be swept away by the cares of this world. This was meant to be an unending and reasonable service. To present your body as a living sacrifice HOLY and acceptable and unto me because I dwell within. No amount of works in your own power will ever make what was accomplished at the cross the shadow. You overcome because Christ died. We are to be as one in covenant relationship together. Pressing TOGETHER! Let me hold you when the weight becomes heavy and seemingly unbearable. Run to me and I will carry you. You will not have to leave Me to live life; you can stay here and live life victoriously.**

*“God himself is at rest. And at the end of*

*the journey, we will surely rest with God. So let's keep at it and eventually arrive at the place of rest, not drop out through some sort of disobedience. God means what he says. What he says goes. His powerful Word is sharp as a surgeon's scalpel, cutting through everything, whether doubt or defense, laying us open to listen and obey. Nothing and no one is impervious to God's Word. We cannot get away from it—no matter what. We do not have a priest who is out of touch with our reality. He's been through weakness and testing, experienced it all—all but the sin. The High Priest Who Cried Out in Pain Now that we know what we have—Jesus, this great High Priest with ready access to God—let's not let it slip through our fingers. So let's walk right up to him and get what he is so ready to give. Take the mercy, accept the help.” Hebrews 4:10-16 MSG*

*(Continued from page 5)*

that was served. I couldn't believe that a church would invite people who were probably already feeling like second-class citizens because of their circumstances and treat them so shamefully. I'm sure they probably ate better at the shelter than they did that day at the picnic. I truly could not believe what my eyes were seeing.

I was truly VEXED in my spirit. I was so upset that I had to leave. Something just would not allow me to stay and witness such injustice. I kept thinking what happened to, “You should love your neighbor as yourself,” or “Love does no harm to a neighbor.” (Romans 13:9f, 10a). I kept thinking about how Jesus fed the multitudes in

Mark 7:2-8. He didn't say, “Give these people fish and bread but give those over there only bread.” He treated them all the same. He made no difference! Neither should we. We shouldn't elevate ourselves above those less fortunate than us.

I thought that maybe I was overreacting but a woman who attended the picnic with her children later told me that she felt like her children were begging for food. There was a line of adults and her daughter waiting for some hot links. She was upset that they served her daughter ( a guest) last while church members (adults) were served first. She couldn't understand why they made her daughter wait since she was the only child in line. And mind you these people had already eaten and was coming back for more while this was the child's first meal at the picnic.

What's so sad about this story is that be-

cause they had so much meat left, they ended up trying to cook it later in the day to try and get rid of it. They even ended up having to throw some meat away because it had sat out all day uncooked. I hope they learned from this that you should serve your guest first (which they didn't, they started serving church members first) and that you should serve your guest your best.

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**Rick, thanks for your submission. My mother is constantly looking for articles she can inspire the congregation where she attends once a month. She will be reading “Jesus is Better than Santa” for the Christmas play.**

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## WE BELIEVE

the Scriptures to be the inspired Word of God and our ultimate and final authority for faith in practice.

**WE BELIEVE** in one God, revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God, our perfect heavenly Father, loves and cares for all.

**WE BELIEVE** that Jesus Christ, God's Son, sacrificially died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sin and is Savior to those who believe in Him.

**WE BELIEVE** that the Holy Spirit was sent by God to live in and transform the lives of believers into the likeness of Christ.

**WE BELIEVE** that God created us in His image; that sin brought separation from God; and that all who receive salvation by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ are no longer separated from Him but become children of God. The only way to become a Christian is by turning from a sinful life to Christ, and by trusting in Him as Lord and Savior. Only then can we begin to delight in God as He intended.

**WE BELIEVE** that the Church, Christ's radiant bride, is a spiritual body made up of all believers, each of whom is a vital part of God's plan.



By Melinda McQueen  
Marshall, TX

What is your Christmas wish? Is it for peace on earth? Maybe you are wishing for a stable job, security for your family, or perhaps you wish for better health. Whatever the wish, whatever the need, it is important.

Wishes come in many sizes and strengths. While each may be different, each has the same hope. Christmas has been a time for wishes to come true, if one consciously thinks upon it or not. It is a time for miracles, a time to expect the extraordinary. We are reminded to think of the miraculous birth of Jesus and in doing so, we are given a refreshed hope. "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter 1:3)

Some find certain things in which they look forward to, things they identify with Christmas. Perhaps it's the selecting of the perfect Christmas Tree, or hosting the traditional Christmas Party. Settling in on Christmas Eve, baking pies and tucking

# The Gift of Christmas



your kids in bed so Santa can come.

Gifts have always been a big part of the season. The giving and receiving between loved ones tell of the love we have for one another, even the gift of your time can mean so much. The love you give this Christmas could mean more than you realize. The sharing of faith is a great gift, to shed forth the light of Christ. Having assurance in God we have the assurance that faith brings. (Hebrews 10:22) With whom will you share your faith with this Christmas?

If peace is what you are wishing for, seek your peace from God, it shall fill your heart, let it overflow and touch other hearts. If it's a job you're seeking, remember times before when God met your needs. He can and is willing to do so again. If your health isn't as it should be, place your trust in the God of miracles. The Healer can set you free in ways you can only begin to imagine. Whatever your Christmas wish is, the Gift Giver knows.

As we give and receive this Christmas among family and friends... As we become excited over nice things like diamonds, new cars, and plasma TVs, may we also keep in mind the greatest gift ever given. The ultimate gift was given when God gave Jesus, His Son. Loving us so much He gave the most precious gift for it was the only way we could spend eternity with Him.

A time to reflect and a time to give without holding

back. Though we could never give as much as God, we can give the gift of His love. So, as you're drinking hot cocoa, and as you go about your Christmas cheer, give thanks by sharing the gift of Christmas.

**The Bridge you burn now may be the one you later have to cross.**

...

*If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Romans 12:18*

When Abraham Lincoln was campaigning for the presidency, one of his arch-enemies was Edwin McMasters Stanton. Stanton hated Lincoln, and used every ounce of his energy to degrade Lincoln in the eyes of the public, often using the bitterest diatribes in an attempt to embarrass him. In the process of choosing his cabinet after his election, Lincoln selected various members and then faced a decision about the important – most of secretary of War. He chose Stanton! The president's inner circle erupted in an uproar when they heard his choice. Numerous advisors came to Lincoln saying, "Mr. President, you are making a mistake. Are you familiar with all the ugly things he has said about you? He is your enemy. He will sabotage your programs." Lincoln re-plied, "Yes, I know Mr. Stanton, But...I find he is the best man for the job." As Secretary of War Stanton gave invaluable service to his nation and his president. After Lincoln was assassinated, many laudable statements were made about Abraham Lincoln, but the words of Stanton remain among the greatest. Standing near Lincoln's coffin, Stanton called Lincoln one of the greatest men who ever lived and said, "He now belongs to the ages."

Source Cited

God's little Devotional Book, Pg. 46  
Honor Books, Inc. Tulsa, Oklahoma



By Yolanda Ford  
Park Forest, IL

## “I’M TIRED OF DOING GOD’S WORK”



Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? “Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I will show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I will not lay anything heavy or ill fitting on you. Keep Company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”  
Matthew 11:28-30 (MSG)

I was talking to Wanda about ALL 50,000 visions and ideas I have. I am excited about each one. The problem is I try to achieve them all at the SAME time. For example, instead of completing each vision in phases, I would grab a piece from each phase. That is crazy! I end up running around like a chicken with my head cut off and wondering, “Why am I so exhausted doing God’s work?” It is because I would not be at peace with what HE said HE is going to do. Technically, that is trying to help God out. I did not recognize it as that in the beginning. We pick up load after load trying to “help God out” because we do not see how He is going to do it.

Then, the Lord reminded me of Moses. Moses had a relationship with God, he knew God, and they were in an intimate relationship. Moses trusted God to use him. He told Pharaoh let ‘em go. Pharaoh resisted. God made miracles happen and bada bing bada boom, Pharaoh let the people go. God gives Moses a direction and Moses goes in that direction. Everything is peachy until Moses is approaching the water. He was probably thinking, “God, all I see is water. Why are we still moving in this direction? This is nuts! I thought we were going towards land? You told me to go this way but we’re approaching water. OMG! Am I going to fail all these people behind me? What am I gonna tell all these people? How can I face them? People trust me because I trust You God. Pharaoh’s army is coming! All I see is the water!” Who knows what would’ve happened if Moses would’ve innocently changed the direction to “help God out”.

We know where God is taking us and we can KINDA see how we’re gonna get there. And what we can’t make sense out of we try with our own strength to make sense of it all. As a result, WE GET EXHAUSTED, CRANKY, UNZEALOUS, ANNOYED, PETTY, UNHEALTHY. If that’s not enough, we’re mentally exhausted trying to figure out how to dismantle the mess. The truth is God has it all under control. It’s not up to us to know every single detail. The only thing we need to wrap our minds around is His MIGHTINESS. If you don’t see a particular bridge in the blueprints He has given you, it must not be bothering Him. If it’s not bothering Him, it’s not bothering you. Please don’t try to make a bridge. God is ALWAYS right. God NEVER fails. God’s timing is PERFECT. If God is telling you to approach a door and it APPEARS to be shut, keep moving in that direction. Don’t go pushing your weight against other doors that are shut and are gonna stay shut. Stand at the door, keep knocking, and it will open in due season. (Matthew 7: 7-8 (NLT) It’s WAY less exhausting!

<sup>14</sup> There is one thing we can be sure of when we come to God in prayer. If we ask anything in keeping with what he wants, he hears us. <sup>15</sup> If we know that God hears what we ask for, we know that we have it. 1 John 5: 14-15 (NIRV) We don’t serve the kind of God who asks us to pray and only to ignore us. Spend time with Him in prayer. “Father thank You for your love. We thank you that every false burden is lifted from our shoulders in Jesus name. Forgive us for accepting heavy loads out of anxiety. We understand that when we take on too much, we miss out on what You are saying. Make it clear to us again, Your will for our lives. Refresh us in Your newness. We take this time to be still in Your presence and we

download instructions from the throne. We receive them with a willing heart to serve. It is your way and your way alone. In Jesus name, Amen.



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the answers were shocking. Some believed that Jesus was born of a virgin while others admitted that the Christmas season was the only time they consider the importance and miracle of His birth. I asked the same people what they thought the implications of His birth were. The responses were disappointing. These interviews helped me to realize many Christians do not understand the mission of Jesus Christ.

The first prophesy of scripture found in Genesis 3:15. Reveals that salvation had to come from the Lord. God promised that the “seed” of the woman would ultimately destroy the serpent (Satan). God made it happen by His power, and not the effort of human intelligence. The virgin birth of Christ is an unmistakable reminder that salvation can never come through human effort, but must be the work of God himself. This was a supernatural work of God. As the story of Jesus’ birth unfolds within the scripture, we see the miracle of how Jesus was brought to earth to work out his mission before the eyes of men and women.

As you have read in the Scripture, we have been charged and commissioned by Christ to have Godly influence throughout the earth. He gave us the ability to carry governmental

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## THE REASON FOR THE SEASON

By Gerry Smith

Fairfield, CT



Greetings once again, in the blessed name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It's good to be back with S&L after an extended absence. I know God has been blessing the hearts of readers of this publication and will continue to use it to reach hearts and bring souls to him. It is that time of year once again; my, how it seems like it was just yesterday we were buying presents, wishing everyone Merry Christmas and setting up the tree. Yet here we are, a year later, remembering the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the reason there's hope for any of us at all today. I admit, this is my favorite time of year! I enjoy seeing people I don't know wishing me and others a happy holiday season. I also enjoy the atmosphere. That feeling of love, peace and happiness; how I wish that spirit would last all year! So, Christmas is a time to reflect on the birth of Christ and that reflection should garner us some insight. In other words, contemplation brings knowledge. But what does Christmas really mean to us? What is the reason for this time of year?

When we think of Christmas, we remember Christ being born into this world, we remember his life on earth, and we remember him dying for our sins. Yet through our reminiscing have we ever stopped to notice that some of our more common perceptions of Christ's birth aren't reality? For example, we sing "We three kings of orient are, bearing gifts we travel afar..." yet, do we realize the Bible never tells us that those gift bearers were kings, or how many of them there were? In Matthew 2:7-10, it says that wise men came to see Jesus, it does not state how many there were. Yet we love to refer to "the three wise men". Here's another one for you in the same chapter of Matthew, verse 11: it says when the wise men came to the house, they saw Jesus, but more often than not, we say they found him in a manger. When you learn that it was in a house and not in

the manger that the wise men found Jesus, you begin realize that it might not necessarily have been right after his birth that they came, because the Bible gives no specification of the time. As a matter of fact, Jesus could have been close to two years old at the time which would make sense when you consider that Herod gave the order to kill all babies aged two and under. I know this might seem trivial to most, but when we understand the finer details it greatly enhances the bigger picture. I trust this little tidbit will bring some understanding to someone through the aid of the Holy Spirit.

On another note, Christmas gives us a chance to be selfless. Sometimes during the year, as we follow our daily routines, we can miss seeing those who are in need; not that we should, but we do. Christmas-time seems to heighten our awareness of need and reminds us of the need to help those among us who are less fortunate. Being neighborly, caring and giving to others as God gave to us, (giving of his only Son) is the heart of Christmas. For me Matthew 25: 34 is so poignant in terms of what this time of year should be for all of us. While we enjoy receiving gifts, (I know I do) it's more so about what we can give, about the lives we can touch, the smiles we can put on the faces of those who would love to just have something to eat, or the child with a toy and the look of joy on a mother's or father's face to see that child happy.

Giving at this time of the year, it is what makes it all worthwhile. For as God gave to us His Son, we in return should give, whatever it is we can to bring joy, love, and peace to the lives of others. For Christ said, "inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these, you have done it unto me." I trust that as we hustle about in preparation to celebrate this holiday season, we not miss the little things that truly tell of Christ's birth and life on earth and that we not miss chances to give of ourselves to others. Most of all I trust that we not miss the chance to give OURSELVES over to

the teaching and the leading of the Holy Spirit. May you have a blessed holiday season, may the Prince of Peace shine through richly in your hearts! I pray that you all will prosper and be in good health, even as our souls prosper. Merry Christmas to one and all!

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authority and responsibility because "Emanuel, God with us" is actively engaged as we open our hearts and follow His Spirit. Our responsibility is to teach the generations after us about the provisional gift, to all that will listen!

May this be the Christmas your eyes are opened to the truth, and the reality of the mission of Jesus Christ. May you receive the forgiveness of sin, power to defeat sin, the clarity of reconciliation, power to help people be restored into the favor of God. Remember, when you put your heart into Gods Kingdom; God's Kingdom comes to you and gives the anointing to complete the assignment.

### **Your Assignment Starts Now!**

Don't let Jesus walk into the room and discover that He is nowhere to be found!

[The Doctrinal Importance of the Virgin Birth](#) (An excerpt from Wayne Grudem's Systematic Theology)

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**Veronica, thanks for sharing your experience with us, Its sad to think that those who call themselves Christians would allow anything like that to happen in the household of faith. We really need to pray for those in leadership.**

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# 2010 WRITERS GUIDELINES

Revised November 26, 2010



1. If the content within your article does not reflect the Vision, Mission statement, or the Word of God, it's not published.
2. Articles should be your own original writing. Plagiarism is unethical and considered stealing someone else's ideas or words and using them as your own. Cite your references.
3. Include two or more Scriptures within your treatise to reveal the parallel of your creation with Scripture.
4. Articles are a maximum of one page. You may use a size 10 – 12 font. If you feel your article should be longer, create a series by submitting; part one, two, & three. Each part of the series will be published in a separate issue.
5. All articles should include a title. Add your name and state, as this will allow the reading audience to identify where you are from.
6. Send us your name, address, phone number & an e-mail address so we can add you to the "Salt & Light Writers Directory". There may be a time we need to speak directly with you or send you information. We will not give your personal information to a third party without your permission.
7. Pen names are acceptable and sometimes necessary depending of the nature of your writing. If you write about a controversial topic, you may want to remain anonymous to avoid personal injury. "Secrets of the Emergency Room" by 'Dr. Dread' may sound like a gimmick, but it does establish that the author is a doctor and that his or her information may jeopardize careers. In a different vein, you may choose a pseudonym based on a character you enjoy from literature or history. A well-chosen pseudonym can add an air of mystery or intrigue". ([http://www.essortment.com/all/penname\\_ravc.htm](http://www.essortment.com/all/penname_ravc.htm)). The goal here is to speak the truth in Love, with boldness and for some it may mean that you hide behind the cross!
8. Send a Recent photo; (head-to-waist ), one that reflects the image of God. Photos are not required to publish your article.
9. When submitting your articles by e-mail, type on the subject line: ARTICLE FOR SALT & LIGHT

## The Vision

Present Christ  
Discipleship  
Freeing Captives  
Restore Hope  
Home Mission Bible studies

## The Mission

*Writing it down helps people to read and re-read. Our writings become a mantle of our faith. Writing is a breeding ground for planting seeds that will last a life time, Even after we are gone to be with the Lord. Others will pick up this Magazine and gain hope, restoration, direction, and prayerfully, take the mantle and run with it!*

*Think about it, through the years people are blessed because someone took the time to write it down. We are challenged this very hour to write it down...and then publish it!*

(Continued from page 9)

Kym, thanks for reminding us that we really need to step away from the hustle and bustle of the world, and listen to our Fathers voice. Its comforting knowing we have a Father and a Priest that is just a whisper away!

Holy Spirit, thanks for sending the writers for this quarters messages. Thanks for the inspiration you give us to share your goodness and mercy with our reading audience. We trust this work is not void but accomplishes everything you sent it to do, thanks for leading and being the teacher within us!

Yolanda, you hit the hammer right on the nail! I am guilty of juggling too many balls at the same time. Your article was right on time! I love your statement about trying to make a bridge.

Dorothy, thanks for your labor of Love! You are a Jewel... When we were in a crunch for a proofreader you stepped out in faith . It has been fun working with you. You are a professional who has never waivered. Thanks for your proofreading service.

Melinda, thanks for reminding us that the ultimate gift is Jesus Christ. What ever we need He has it all we have to do is place our trust in Him alone if we really want to discover how powerful He really is!

Gerry, thanks for reminding us that Christmas is a great time to practice being selfless! A time to help those among us who are less fortunate than ourselves, then they will begin to see the reflection of Jesus.

Thanks J.V. For 7 years of  **blessings**   
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